

Serial No. 10/730,089

Attorney Docket No. 02-107

REMARKS

Claims 2-19 and 25 are pending. Claims 1, 20-24 and 26 have been canceled. The applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 10, 13, 17, and 18 were objected to as depending on a rejected base claim. However, these claims were said to contain allowable subject matter and were said to be allowable if written in independent form. Claims 10, 13, and 17 have been written in independent form including all of the limitations of their base claims and any intervening claims. Therefore, claims 10, 13, and 17 should be in condition for allowance.

Claims 1 and 25 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by the French patent to Beneteau. Claim 1 has been canceled and thus will not be discussed. As for claim 25, the applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn for the following reasons.

Claim 25 has been amended to include the limitations of original claim 17. Although original claim 17 did not depend on claim 25, since original claim 17 was considered to contain allowable subject matter, the applicants believe that this amendment places claim 25 in condition for allowance.

The French patent to Beneteau fails to disclose the limitations of amended claim 25. That is, the French patent to Beneteau fails to disclose the support member that detachably holds the blade rubber and the backing plates as claimed. Therefore, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-4, 11, 12, 14, 15, and 25 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over the German patent to Mueller in view of De Block '926. Claim 1 has been

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canceled and will not be discussed. As for claims 2-4, 11, 12, 14, 15, and 25, the applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn for the following reasons.

Claims 2-4, 11, 12, 14, 15 now depend on claim 17, which was said to contain allowable subject matter. Therefore, claims 2-4, 11, 12, 14, 15 are considered to be in condition for allowance.

As mentioned above, claim 25 has been amended to include the limitations of original claim 17, which was said to contain allowable subject matter. The combination of the German patent to Mueller in view of De Block '926 fails to disclose the support member that detachably holds the blade rubber and the backing plates as claimed. Therefore, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 5-9, 20-24, and 26 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over the German patent to Mueller in view of De Block '926 and Bauer *et al.* Claims 20-24 and 26 have been canceled and thus will not be discussed. As for claims 5-9, the applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn because claims 5-9 now depend on claim 17, which was said to contain allowable subject matter. Therefore, claims 5-9 are considered to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 16 and 19 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over the German patent to Mueller in view of De Block '926 and the German patent to Breesch. The applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn because claims 16 and 19 now depend on claim 17, which was said to contain allowable subject matter. Therefore, claims 16 and 19 are considered to be in condition for allowance.

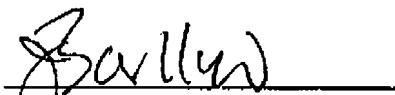
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In view of the foregoing, the applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance. A timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

If there are any problems with the payment of fees, please charge any underpayments and credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,



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